

Tasteful Diversions

Dining and entertainment supplement included in this issue.

Spending Plans Set

Budgets for the year that begins July 1 have been set by four South Brunswick Islands towns. Check in this issue for the bottom line in Shallotte, Sunset Beach, Calabash and Holden Beach.

Island Living

Supplement included in this issue.

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Holden Beach Commissioners Approve Mainland Annexation

BY DOUG RUTTER

Holden Beach Commissioners Monday voted 3-2 to annex the town's first mainland territory, but it's unlikely that the controversial issue is settled.

As expected, board members William Williamson, Gil Bass and Gay Atkins voted in favor of annexation Monday night, while Bob Buck and Georgia Langley cast opposing votes.

The board cast the same 3-2 vote at its last meeting on June 5, but the second vote was required because a four-fifths majority is required on the first balloting.

The annexation ordinance is scheduled to take effect on June 30, 1990, bringing into the town limits approximately 67 acres of commercial and residential property on either side of the causeway.

However, the annexation could be rescinded by the present board or a future board. All five seats on the board of commissioners will be up for election in November.

Speaking of the one year before the annexation takes effect, Mayor John Tandy said, "There are a lot of things that can happen between now and then."

Commissioner Atkins added, "This gives us a year to listen to everybody that wants to say what they want to say."

Prior to this week's vote, board members favoring annexation were asked to explain their positions, and all denied that the action will result in any personal gain.

Williamson and Atkins said annexation will allow the board to protect the residential nature of the island but still allow the town to grow in an orderly fashion.

Bass opened his comments by stating that everyone would like to see things stay as they are, but cited statistics on the growth of Brunswick County to show how fast the area is changing.

"Growth has come to this county," he said. "We don't want to recognize that, but if you're an elected officer you've got to look toward the future."

Due to the urban nature of the

"I cannot sit here and let Holden Beach be cut off from future growth."

—Gil Bass

Holden Beach Commissioner

causeway area, he said that if it is not annexed, it will eventually become a separate municipality. "If Holden Beach is cut off from growth, it would be a great disservice to this island," he said. "I cannot sit here and let Holden Beach be cut off from future growth."

Commissioner Langley, who has opposed annexation of residential areas fearing a shift in power from the island to the mainland, said this week that two of the three board members who favor the measure have a conflict of interest because their employers own property in the area proposed for annexation.

She argued that Bass, manager of Holden Beach Fishing Pier, has a conflict of interest because the owner of the pier also owns property in the area proposed for annexation. Ms. Atkins works for Alan Holden Realty, which also owns land on the causeway.

Commissioners Bass and Atkins both denied that their situations represent a conflict of interest, although Ms. Atkins agreed that annexation may help the firm sell a piece of property that has been on the market for some time.

A motion from Commissioner Langley to hold a non-binding referendum of the island's registered voters concerning the annexation proposal drew support from Buck, but failed when the three commissioners who favor annexation voted it down.

Mrs. Langley had asked that the referendum be held as soon as possible as a means of measuring public opinion of the plan.

However, Commissioner Atkins said it's easier for each board member to talk with individuals than to hold a special vote.

"If you really want what the people want, you should have no problem

with it," argued Mrs. Langley. "I feel strongly that whatever the people want should happen."

Earlier in the discussion, she had said that there are two distinct groups on the island—one that makes its living from real estate and development and another group that is primarily made up of retired residents.

"I feel like there are two groups here to be represented and maybe I'm looking at it wrong," said Mrs. Langley. "I feel like there are a lot of people on this island that are opposed to it, and I feel like they have the right to be heard."

Buck said he favored the referendum because he is unsure how residents feel about the proposal.

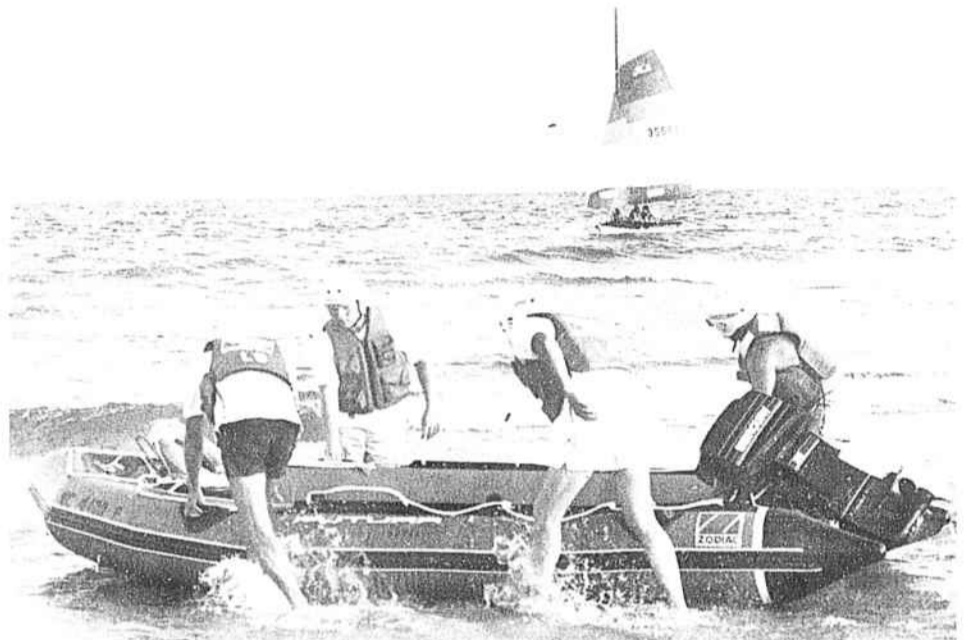
He defended his vote against annexation by stating that there are no substantial benefits for either side and that future annexations could change the character of the town. Buck also acknowledged strong public opposition to the proposal at a public hearing in April.

Although the issue of mainland annexation has been debated for nearly three years, there was a lengthy discussion of the proposal before and after this week's vote with some of the audience members who crowded town hall fervently opposing the action.

Cletis Clemmons, a causeway merchant who led an effort about 2½ years ago to incorporate the Town of North Holden Beach when talk of annexation intensified, pleaded with the town board to expand the area proposed for annexation if it planned to go through with it.

"If you're gonna make a town out of it, let's make a town of it, let's go gung ho," he said. "If you're not, stay on this side of the bridge."

He asked the board to stop its an-
(See ANNEXATION, Page 2-A)



STAFF PHOTO BY RAHN ADAMS

WATER RESCUE TEAM MEMBERS of the Ocean Isle Beach Volunteer Fire Department launch their inflatable surf boat Sunday evening from the strand about a mile west of the Ocean Isle Beach fishing pier. The team towed to shore a disabled catamaran that had been abandoned after an accident and successful rescue mission that afternoon. The sailboat in the background was not related to the rescue effort.

Three Rescued After Craft Disabled Off Ocean Isle

BY RAHN ADAMS

Three local residents were rescued unharmed Sunday after they drifted in the ocean off Ocean Isle Beach for 1½-hours on a disabled catamaran.

The rescue was one of three calls—two of them related—handled Sunday afternoon by Ocean Isle Beach Volunteer Fire Department's water rescue team. There were no injuries in either of the two unrelated incidents.

Ocean Isle Beach VFD Chief Terry Barbee said authorities were notified that the trio had been spotted adrift in the water Sunday around 3 p.m. The three were Jay Houston, Glenn Humbert and a woman whose name was not available.

Barbee said he did not know who initially sighted the stranded sailors, since their craft was between one mile and 1½ miles offshore. "Without binoculars, you could hardly see them," he said.

Using their inflatable surf boat, members of the fire department's water rescue team reached the disabled catamaran and found the three individuals sitting astride one of the pontoons, Barbee said. The other pontoon had broken, filled with water and sunk.

"They said they were just glad to

see us," Barbee said, adding that the rescue team ferried the trio back to the strand in the surf boat.

Sunday around 7:30 p.m., a woman noticed Houston's disabled catamaran floating offshore about a mile west of the Ocean Isle Beach fishing pier and reported that she thought she saw a person in the water near it, Barbee said.

He said the water rescue team went out again in the surf boat, checked the area and found no one, then towed the catamaran back to the beach to keep it from causing any additional emergency calls.

The other rescue occurred at the far western end of Holden Beach Sunday evening, immediately before Barbee and his crew were called out the second time about the catamaran.

Holden Beach Police Chief Raymond Simpson said the incident involved seven-year-old Suzanne Allen and her parents, George and Sarah Allen, of Seattle, Wash.

Police were called to 1279 Ocean Boulevard West at 7:10 p.m., after a large raft ridden by the mother and daughter floated too far off the beach, said Simpson and Barbee.

Simpson said the pair was stranded near a sand bar several hundred feet

from the beach. The father swam out to the raft but apparently was unable to tow it back to shore. He waited for rescuers with the child, while Mrs. Allen swam to shore.

According to Barbee, Mrs. Allen reached the strand about the time the Ocean Isle VFD surf boat arrived on the scene and helped the man and girl back to the beach.

Holiday Fireworks Planned At Holden

Campground By The Sea at Holden Beach will once again sponsor fireworks display to help celebrate Independence Day.

William Williamson, campground manager, said the fireworks show will begin at about 9:30 p.m. on Tuesday, July 4, and that this year's program should be "bigger and better than ever."

Although the fireworks will be shot off over the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway, he warns that spectators should watch for fallout and park at their own risk.

The campground is located on Holden Beach approximately five miles west of the bridge.

Federal Funds Allocated For Lockwood Folly Inlet Dredging

BY DOUG RUTTER

Lockwood Folly Inlet would continue to be dredged with federal funds next year under the president's latest budget proposal, but not at the same level as in the past.

The inlet, which earlier this year was dropped entirely from next year's proposed budget, will likely be maintained with federal dollars at least through next fall, according to an official with the agency that coordinates dredging projects.

Billy Narron, chief of programs management with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Wilmington, said the corps has spent an average of \$440,000 per year to maintain Lockwood Folly Inlet over the past five years.

The latest budget proposal President George Bush sent to Congress last month allocates \$329,000 for dredging of the inlet.

"We don't feel like the \$329,000 will keep it in as good a shape as it has been in the past," said Narron, "but we do feel it will keep it open and operating."

Although the budget still needs to be passed by Congress, Corps officials said they expect the latest proposal for inlet dredging funds to be approved as presented.

Marty van Duyn, public affairs officer with the Corps, said the impact of the proposed cutback for the local inlet may mean that it is not dredged

as often or as deep as it has been in the past. The inlet is currently dredged about twice a year.

In any event, she said the Corps will not spend as much money to maintain the inlet between Holden Beach and Long Beach next fiscal year as it has in other years. Fiscal year 1990 starts October 1 and runs through Sept. 30, 1990.

"We're going to be maintaining it to a lesser degree," she said. "We've had to spread things around to try to cover things as much as we can. All of our projects have been affected by this."

In January, former President Ronald Reagan submitted a budget to Congress that included no money for the continued maintenance dredging of Lockwood Folly Inlet and nine other coastal waterways in North Carolina.

The deletion of those projects was part of a proposed \$8.3 million cutback in maintenance dredging in the state.

Following strong opposition from commercial and recreational fishermen and elected officials representing coastal areas, the Corps set up a task force to study the maintenance dredging projects.

The task force recommendation released last month provided for the continued dredging of more than half of the North Carolina waterways left out of the original proposal without

involving any additional federal funds, but did not include Lockwood Folly Inlet.

When Reagan submitted the original proposal in January, local marina operators speculated that it would take less than one year for the inlet to fill in to the point that it would restrict commercial boat traffic.

In addition to hurting commercial fishermen, they said it would harm shellfishermen who work in Lockwood Folly River, recreational anglers and other tourist-related businesses.

Since the plan to discontinue dredging of Lockwood Folly Inlet was proposed, marina operators and fishermen in the Holden Beach area have been writing letters and sending petitions to representatives to restore the funding.

Danny Liebl, manager of Holden Beach Marina, said this week that while news of next year's funding is good, the inlet needs to be dredged before the fall. "I'm glad to hear that they're trying to do something to keep it open, but I'm not sure that's going to help us this summer."

Liebl said the inlet hasn't been dredged since last fall and should have been done this spring. "It's definitely needed now," he said. "We've got some places in there at low tide you've only got five feet of water. It's really shoaling up in there."

Sunset Beach Adopts Budget With No Change In Tax Rate

BY RAHN ADAMS

Instead of a lower tax rate, property owners at Sunset Beach will get increased services, as the result of an anticipated surplus in town revenue that will be used for capital improvements.

At Monday night's 1¼-hour meeting, Sunset Beach Town Council adopted the town's 1989-90 budget ordinance on a 4-1 vote, with Councilwoman Minnie Hunt dissenting.

The \$582,791 budget reflects no change in the town's present property tax rate of 16.7 cents per \$100 of property valuation.

Ms. Hunt told the Beacon after the meeting that she opposed the budget due to questions she still has about certain items, particularly how the town will handle sanitation services in the coming year, which was a separate topic of discussion Monday.

At Ms. Hunt's recommendation, the board will meet on Thursday, Ju-

ly 20, beginning at 9 a.m., to discuss whether or not the town should contract sanitation services or continue handling it with town employees and equipment.

Also at the July 20 meeting, the council will meet with the Sunset Beach Planning and Zoning Board to discuss an annexation proposal, involving the Sea Trails and Sugar Sands developments east of the town limits extending to N.C. 904 on the south side of N.C. 179 and a smaller tract at Oyster Bay Golf Links that includes a condominium complex.

Balancing The Budget

Figures in the town budget basically were unchanged from when the council balanced the budget at a work session on May 30 by proposing a \$108,184 capital improvement fund.

Revenues in 1989-90 are expected to total \$452,018. Almost \$290,000 of that amount coming from ad valorem taxes, based on a total property

valuation of almost \$182.7 million and a 99 percent collection rate at the 16.7-cent tax rate.

The town expects to spend \$474,607 in the coming year, not counting the capital improvement fund, which Mayor Mason Barber indicated Monday that the new fund could be used for paving, sidewalks, parking or other capital projects.

Other individual departmental budgets reflected in the approved budget are:

- Governing Body, \$3,750.
 - Administration, \$63,176.
 - Legal, \$5,000.
 - Elections, \$1,000.
 - Public Buildings, \$16,380.
 - Police, \$169,736.
 - Inspections, \$700.
 - Streets, \$75,488.
 - Sanitation, \$38,685.
 - Drain and Watershed, \$20,000.
 - Planning and Zoning, \$20,540.
- (See SUNSET BEACH, Page 2-A)